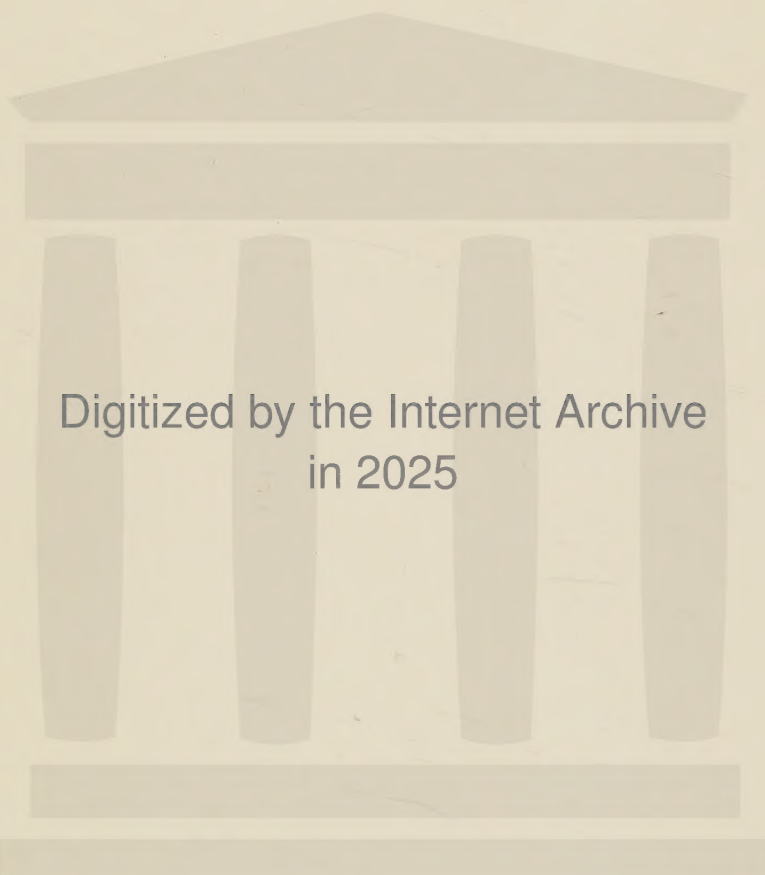


Henry Compton
Bishop of London
by
Charles P. Keith

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HENRY, BISHOP OF LONDON

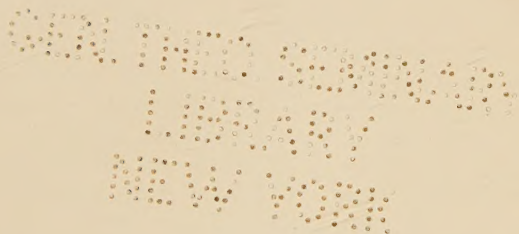
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HENRY COMPTON
Bishop of London

By

CHARLES P. KEITH, Litt. D.



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HENRY COMPTON,

Bishop of London.

By

CHARLES P. KEITH, Litt. D. (U. of P. 1919.).

Read before the Church Historical Society at its Meeting
in Philadelphia, February 10, 1919.

The first bishop to exercise anything like jurisdiction over Pennsylvania was Henry Compton, the ninety-fourth Bishop of London, counting Restitutus as the first occupant of that see. Compton is quite a unique figure in several aspects in the line of English Protestant bishops before the Nineteenth Century. He has celebrity, not as a rare saint or a theological torchbearer or extinguisher, but for part in the English Revolution, a movement by origin ecclesiastical, but in form political. Mere embroilment in secular affairs, however, is not strange for a representative of a Church treated as a branch of a State. By the English Constitution, from the time that bishops were taken into Kings' councils or Parliament, until, in our own day, the House of Lords practically lost power, the occupant of the see of London was *ex officio* a politician—perhaps we should say “statesman,” but the late Thomas B. Reed defined “statesman” as “a politician who is dead.” An attitude in politics may, and in Compton's case did, excite for a “father in God” dislike and want of respect from opponents; a political course may, and in Compton's case did, lead to actions which will be discussed and perhaps condemned by casuists. Nevertheless, political functions do not preclude a moral life, pious observances, and the performance of some routine ecclesiastical business. Theoretically, and except in very corrupt times actually, compliance so far with our ideal of a church officer has been the condition upon which spiritual office with political functions has been conferred. In private or strictly Church affairs, there is no evidence of any breach of such condition by Compton.

The exigencies or the gratitude of alternately the State and the Church insisted upon brains when such an office was to be filled. In the Middle Ages, there was throughout

Europe the absorption of the Church's dignitaries and revenues by the powerful families of the realms, except as interfered with by Papal control. In England, this absorption ceased in the last years of the Plantagenet kings, and from that time the bishoprics have been given as a rule to those whom we would call "self-made men," some of them sprung from the humble classes, the majority from small property owners. While down to the present day, such bishops as have not been the first persons of their name to be heard of, have been the sons or nephews of eminent literary or professional men in as many instances as of peers and squires. In Tudor and Stuart days, as far as I have ascertained, Cardinal Pole and the subject of this sketch were the only bishops who were of noble birth, unless we count Bishop Crewe, whose father was created a baron after that bishop was born. The Compton family had been distinguished for wealth and valor during even many generations before Queen Elizabeth summoned to Parliament Henry Compton, great-grandfather of the subject of this sketch, as Baron Compton of Compton. This baron married Frances, daughter of the Earl of Huntingdon. Her mother, a niece of Cardinal Pole, was a daughter and heiress of Henry Pole, Lord Montagu; and thus a strain of Plantagenet blood descended to William Compton, first Earl of Northampton, and to his son Spencer Compton, the second Earl. Bishop Compton was the sixth and youngest son of the second Earl by his wife, Mary Beaumont, a first cousin of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, favorite of Kings James I and Charles I. In the cause of Charles I, the second Earl raised two thousand men, including his four grown-up sons, and was killed in battle, when his youngest son was about eleven years old. Sir Spencer Compton, the fourth son in age, accompanied Charles II into exile. Miss Strickland, violent in partisanship for the House of Stuart, attributes to Sir Spencer's falling in love with Anne Hyde the opposition long afterwards of the Bishop to James II. Sir Spencer's great admiration of the lady was noticed by Bennet (afterwards Earl of Arlington) in 1654 or 1655, a letter of 1655 from Charles II to Bennet expressing the intention of finding if it was a fact by casually mentioning her name before Sir Spencer. Naturally, she preferred the attentions, which, a year or so later, the exiled King's brother, then known as the Duke of York, afterwards King James II, began to pay her. How far these attentions had gone by the time

of Sir Spencer's death in 1659, we do not know. Her marriage to James was on September 3, 1660.

A fairly satisfactory sketch of the Bishop by S. L. Lee is in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, to which I must refer you for any details for which I have not time; but it says nothing about America. Henry Compton was born at Compton-Wynyates, Warwickshire, in 1632. In early manhood, at various dates, he spent about three years at Oxford, engaged in a rising for the royalist cause, traveled on the Continent, and was a soldier under the Duke of York in Flanders. The obvious course in ordinary times for younger sons of such a family was to become landlords by mating with heiresses. In the Interregnum, which lasted until Henry Compton was about twenty-eight, this was impracticable for him, and he may have precluded himself from doing so later. The statement appears in the *Life of James II*, purporting to be derived from that King's memoranda, that Compton in 1677 had a wife living. We can not disregard this statement possibly from such source, and there is almost a hint of the same fact in Burnett's remark about San-croft's acceptability to some persons from living unmarried. On the other hand, nearly all authorities treat of Compton as if never married, their word "family" meaning "household." The only explanation seems to be that he married some person of such insignificance, and who died so long before him, although after 1677, that the marriage was forgotten by the time such authorities wrote. [Since writing this, I noticed among the marriage licenses issued from the Faculty Office, the list of which has been published, that of a Henry Compton and Mary Hiley on February 17, 1668-1669, when the subject of this sketch had long been "a clerk in orders," but, on examination, the license has been found to concern Henry Compton, of the City of Bristol, merchant. The will of the Bishop, leaving everything to his nephew, Hatton Compton, except some charitable gifts, does not indicate that the testator had ever married.] At the Restoration, the subject of this sketch received the post of cornet in the royal regiment afterwards known as "the Oxford blues," and military service seemed to be his sphere for life.

For the period from the accession of Henry VIII to the Restoration of Charles II, we need not confine to the bishops, but must extend to the priests and deacons our remarks about how generally the holders of ecclesiastical positions in England had sprung from obscure families, if we except the kin-

dred of known literary or professional men. Macaulay speaks of Compton in 1685 as then one of the few clergymen of noble birth. The custom did not grow until later for one of the sons of even the highest families below the royal house to enter the clerical order, while the other sons entered the army or navy. The average Englishman loves a lord, at least he did. At the Restoration, not only was it noticed that the Church establishment afforded a sphere for the scions of impoverished royalists, but it was sensed that the Church would suffer in public consideration if the clerical office were undertaken only by persons of inferior station, unless indeed of a superiority in character and ability over those of higher station. Collins's *Peerage* says that it was represented to Henry Compton that it would be to the honor and dignity of the Established Church to have one of his class take holy orders; and the reader is left to infer that the interest of the Church was the inducement to him. The *Athenæ Oxonienses* of Anthony à Wood does not credit Compton with disinterestedness, and explains that he saw an opening for himself. He left the royal guards, and attended Cambridge University, where he received the degree of M. A. in 1661. He was ordained during the following year. Subsequently he brushed up his learning in a second residence at Oxford, and there took degrees. What did the Church actually gain in a recruit of such antecedents? It gained a naturally bold, self-assured champion, not, as many a priest and even many a bishop was, practically a chaplain to some of the World's great. King James II, who, according to Burnett, hated Compton, once said of him that he talked more like a trooper than a bishop. This may really mean that Compton kept the self-respecting tone of a high-born soldier in contrast with the obsequious language and manner of a contemporary ecclesiastical officeholder. It has been said that the first James on the throne of England was delighted with episcopacy somewhat because of the deferential flattery from the English bishops, after the hectoring to which he had been accustomed from the Scotch Presbyterian ministers. Evelyn in his *Diary* mentions Compton's great modesty in speaking for the degree of doctor; and Burnett, often an opponent of Compton, says that he was humble and modest. So we are prepared to accept the words of Collins's *Peerage*, apparently quoting the funeral sermon of Dr. Gooch, that this spiritual lord was also "courteous, affable, not full of words, but very conversable, and always easy of access." He was a pattern of faithfulness in his work. He was never

a great preacher, nor ranked among the learned men of the day. We need press no further than this the remark of Bishop Burnett: "His preaching was without much life or learning; for he had not gone through his studies with the exactness that was fitting." Writers have echoed this, giving the impression that he was too ignorant for his position, but it must be borne in mind, that, as early as 1669, he received the degree of D.D. from Oxford University. Perhaps the most practical test, where his fitness was of most importance for the English-speaking race, was in the religious education of the Princesses Mary and Anne. By the death of a brother, these became, at the respective ages of nine and six, the heiresses presumptive of their father, then Duke of York, who was himself heir presumptive of King Charles. Compton was intrusted with the duty of seeing these little girls reared as Protestants. Each, indeed, became Queen of England, and each adhered to the position of the National Church. What would have been the result, had Compton or his chosen assistants failed to impress them? Little was published from Compton's pen, even after he became a bishop. Prior to that, he excited some attention by giving to English readers, in 1667, "The Life of Donna Olympia Maldachini," translated from the Italian, and, in 1669, "The Jesuit's Intrigue," translated from the French; and, in 1677, he published a translation of Lortie's "Traité de la Sainte Cène." Dean Milman, in his *Annals of S. Paul's Cathedral*, and S. L. Lee, in the aforesaid article in the Dictionary, have accepted the notion that no great amount of piety is to be placed to Compton's credit, but Collins describes him as "strict and regular in his private devotions and constant and frequent in the service of the church," and says of him and his household: "Besides the public offices morning and evening, his whole family began the day with the litany and ended with select prayers from our liturgy, and at all these times he himself, when able, was a constant attendant." From St. Paul's disclaimer of glorying in anything else, Compton took the words, Εἰμὴ ἐν τῷ ΣΤΑΓΡῳ, ordering them to be carved upon his tomb. Can we not read them as a declaration of his glory, his affection, and his hope?

There was one flaw in Compton's private behavior, at least before becoming a bishop, which I mention in order to escape the imputation of concealing any discreditable truth. His critics seem not to have been aware, but it can be concluded from letters among the State Papers, that he lived ex-

pensively, and was less just in paying his debts promptly than he was afterwards generous in helping with alms and contributions. On this could be founded an opposing argument in the matter of recruiting the ministry from the "county families," that to a profession poorly paid calling for exemplary conduct, there is a risk of discredit from members coming, as Compton did, from early associations of grandeur and bounty giving.

It is not likely that Compton regaled his hearers with Calvinism or Arminianism or any abstruse theology. He was Orthodox and Protestant, and can be described as a "canonical Churchman." That he at one time did not deem episcopal government and ordination universally essential to a branch of the Christian Church, appears from a letter (quoted by Miss Strickland from Birch's MS., Addit. MSS. Brit. Museum 4163, f. 1), written by James II to the Princess of Orange under date of February 28, 1687-1688, wherein it is pointed out that one of the Princess's instructors in religion (apparently Compton) held several tenets which did not agree with the true doctrine of the Church of England. The King says: "This I was not told, but heard him declare it in the pulpit many years since, in the chapel here at Whitehall; and I took notice of it then to a bishop that stood by me; and I know that several others of the clergy do so also, and lean much more to the Presbyterian tenets than they ought to do, and they generally run more and more every day into those opinions than ever they did, and quit their true principles." This sermon at Whitehall was, of course, while James was Duke of York, and the latter's objection to Compton's advancement in 1677 may have sprung from particular dread of the Presbyterian form of Protestantism. The Duke may have remembered his grandfather's observation that "no bishop" would logically lead to "no king."

Holding some small benefices, and having come into public notice, Compton had some claim to advancement in 1673, when there was a triumph of the Protestant gentry over the Roman Catholics surrounding King Charles. The Cabal having been broken up, the Lord Treasurership was given on June 19, 1673, to Sir Thomas Osborne, Bart., then Treasurer of the Navy, who, although late in life created Duke of Leeds, is best known in history as Earl of Danby, a title conferred upon him in 1674. Burnett gratuitously calls Compton "a weak man, wilful and strangely wedded to a party" and "a property of Lord Danby," "turned by him as he pleased"; but

Burnett does not assert that Danby suggested Compton for any place before the see of London became vacant. Burnett does not mention that in 1673 there was some talk of making Compton Bishop of Durham. That such an appointment was expected, we learn from a letter in the State Papers from someone desiring to succeed Compton in a certain benefice. Perhaps because for one of the minor clergy like Compton to take the precedence and opulence of the Prince Bishop of Durham would have been too high a jump, perhaps because Lord Danby thought that Bishop Crewe of Oxford would be very subservient to the Court, if promoted, and whereas Crewe's father, as much as Compton's brother, had a vote in the House of Lords, the see of Durham, after some delay, was given to Crewe. Crewe's see of Oxford was then given to Compton. Nominated as bishop, he was formally elected by the Dean and Chapter on October 20, 1674, and was consecrated by Archbishop Sheldon, assisted by five bishops, on December 6. Compton was allowed to retain *in commendam* a canonry of Christ Church, the mastership of Holy Cross Hospital, and the rectory and vicarage of Witney, positions which he held when promoted. In July, 1675, he was made Dean of the Royal Chapel.

While Bishop of Oxford, Compton seems to have taken an interest in the building of the new cathedral for London, which was to take the place of the dilapidated and burnt St. Paul's, and which now stands as the greatest English specimen of Renaissance architecture. Milman, in his *Annals of St. Paul's*, page 404, says that there was no solemn ceremonial at the laying of the corner-stone, neither the King, the Primate, nor the Diocesan Bishop was present, but Longman's *History*, page 101, says that Bishop Compton witnessed it. This was on June 21, 1675. The Diocesan Bishop, Dr. Henchman, died a few months afterwards. Compton's translation to the vacant bishopric was urged by some strongly Protestant but quite politic clergymen, "because," says Anthony à Wood, "they knew him to be a bold man, an enemy to the papists, and one that would act and speak what they would put him upon, which they themselves would not be seen in, as many prime papists used to say." Burnett speaks of Danby's bringing Compton to succeed Henchman, as if done on Danby's own motion. The translation took place in December, 1675. Almost as a matter of course, a Bishop of London became a member of the Privy Council. Bishop Compton was sworn as such on January 22, 1675-1676. In the Council, he was

often complaining against the actions or influence of the Jesuits. Danby advised the King and Duke to appease the Church by giving Compton satisfaction on these points.

Burnett tells us that Compton applied himself more to his ecclesiastical functions than bishops had commonly done, and that he went much about his diocese, and preached and confirmed in many places. So Compton may, indeed, be called a prototype of the modern working bishop, much as he resembled in various circumstances and acts the mediaeval mitred noble, and far different as he was from the lawn-sleeved university prize man of the intermediate age. Collins, naturally eulogistic of the families in his *Peerage*, says: "So great was his pastoral care of his flock that he not only resided always in his diocese, but even, it may be said, in every part of it; he visited parish by parish, to show that his clergy should do so from house to house. But his diocese being more extensive than all others, and the foreign plantations subject to his care and inspection, he had a longing to visit them also, and nothing could have hindered him from it, but the tumultuous times he lived in." In 1725 or 1726, in the time of one of Compton's successors, the Attorney-General and Solicitor-General of England gave the opinion that ecclesiastical jurisdiction over America did not belong to any bishop in England, but was solely in the Crown by virtue of the King's supreme headship. From the Restoration until then, it seems to have been taken for granted that the plantations as a whole were attached to the see of London, and, even perhaps later, royal instructions and other acts of government were more or less upon this basis, and *pro tanto* cured the defects in the Bishop of London's legal authority and powers. We are told in several works that as early as 1675, the very year of Compton's translation to London, he made inquiry as to the ecclesiastical affairs of the plantations. An order of King Charles I in Council in 1634 was alleged, but no record of it has ever been found as far as I know, committing "to the Bishop of London for the time being the care and pastoral charge of sending over ministers into our British Foreign Plantations and having the jurisdiction of them." There had been little or no action under this, from which any such title could be presumed. The statement is made in *An Account of the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts*, printed in 1706, quoted in Dorr's *History of Christ Church* (Philadelphia), apparently on the authority of Compton, that he found that there were scarcely four ministers of the Church of Eng-

land in all the vast tract of America, and not above one or two of these regularly sent thither under the aforesaid powers. Compton probably heard of no clergyman in any of the North American provinces except Virginia, but overlooked some who were in Virginia in 1675, as there were more than four Anglican ministers then sojourning there. The parishes into which that province was divided, were, however, not all supplied. Until the Propagation Society was organized, the income for American clergymen was only by local provision. A royal gratuity put at the disposal of Compton and his successors enabled them before that and even afterwards to establish congregations, and to control the selection of ministers. Compton induced Charles II to allow to each minister or schoolmaster going with the Bishop's permission to America the sum of £20 as a gratuity to cover the cost of transportation. This was paid during that reign, and also during the reign of the Roman Catholic King James II, and was ordered by Letters Patent Dormant of William and Mary, 8 April, 1689; but subsequently, in the stress of the Treasury, this benevolence was intermitted, but under Queen Anne it was re-established, and it was maintained by her successors. It is probable that among the first so aided by King Charles was Rev. John Yeo, who was one of the three clergymen of the Church known to have been in Maryland in May, 1676. He started services at New Castle in March, 1677-1678, producing his letters of ordination and license, and was the first minister of the Church of England on the Delaware as far as I know. After some trouble, apparently of a political nature, or connected with Lord Baltimore's claims, he returned to Maryland.

In 1677 Archbishop Sheldon died. Earnest friends of the Church appear to have thought that Compton, an uncompromising Protestant, an example in industry, alert in admonishing neglectful clergy, bold against Jesuit machinations, was more to be desired as primate of all England and first peer after the royal family than any pulpit orator or scholarly author. Danby mentioned Compton's name to the King. The Duke of York wished to prevent the appointment. Doubtless there were some divines who asked for a stronger believer in episcopacy; and there seems to have been a sentiment that the chief Anglican ecclesiastic should be a celibate, for the fact that Compton had a wife living at that time appears in the *Life of James II* as an objection to Compton's being appointed. There had been a number of married

bishops, and Sterne, then Archbishop of York, had lost his wife in 1673, nine years after becoming Archbishop, but there had never been any Archbishop of Canterbury with a wife except Cranmer and Parker. Burnett, in one place (page 351) says that Danby "had a peculiar way to make his friends depend upon him and to believe he was true to them." As to the filling of this vacancy, Burnett gives the following opinion: "Compton was persuaded that Lord Danby had tried with all his strength to promote him to Canterbury, though that was never intended. There were none of the order [he means the bishops] that were in any sort fitted for that see whom the court could trust." Sancroft, Dean of Compton's cathedral, described by Burnett as "considerably learned" and "living unmarried," was suggested by the Duke of York, according to Kennet's *History of England*. The Court, in Burnett's opinion, counted upon Sancroft's becoming an inactive speculative man making little opposition, if not being entirely gained over. So he was nominated, and, Burnett says, the High Church party were well pleased. Compton could not help being much disappointed; Lake says in his *Diary* (*Camden Soc. Miscell.*, Vol. I.) that Danby had, three days before the offer to Sancroft, told Compton that he might set his heart at rest, for he would be Archbishop. Yet Compton did not falter in his duties; in a fortnight or so, he is found arranging at a conference which he called of the London clergy that there should be preaching in two of the churches every Wednesday and Friday in the coming Lent.

Nor did disappointed ambition cause this Bishop to neglect the building of St. Paul's, and, long as it took, it was finished during his episcopate. In 1678 or 1679 he printed an address exhorting all persons throughout the kingdom to contribute to the building fund. Strong Protestant as he was, he combatted among various objections the following: "That the sumptuousness and magnificence of churches is not at all suitable to the times of the Gospel, nor according to the simplicity of the primitive Christian worship." This he answered by saying, that, although devotion must be inward and spiritual, yet in its public manifestation, "the circumstance of it should be not only decent, but very solemn and magnificent." When, in 1680, a verdict of 2000£ against Rev. E. Hickeringill in an action for scandal had been secured by Compton, the latter decided to give the money to the building fund of St. Paul's, but the defendant was forgiven upon recantation in the Court of Arches. The part for the choir

was opened for divine service on December 2, 1697, the Thanksgiving Day for the Peace of Ryswick: the building as a whole was finished by the placing of the highest stone of the lantern on the cupola in 1710.

As a peer of the realm, Compton had enough loyalty to the royal line not to vote at least on the final question for the bill to exclude the Duke of York from the throne. Burnett says that all the bishops voted to reject. A note to the Oxford edition (published in 1823) of Burnett's *History* shows that Compton and other bishops may have voted on first reading to commit the bill, but, in that case, must have changed their minds, for Compton was present on the day that the bill was rejected, and all of the thirty who voted against rejection were temporal peers. The article in the *Dictionary of National Biography* declares that Compton voted to reject.

Compton was devoting himself mainly to ecclesiastical affairs with an energy which leads us to think that his promotion was urged less from favoritism than from the sincere belief that he was the man to revivify the Anglican communion. Churchmen who were dissatisfied with his theory, could only commend his attempts to restore religious practice. He had come to the episcopate when there was little Anglican Church life: ceremonies, whatever their efficacy, were neglected; regulations, however beneficial, were a dead letter. He called the clergy of the diocese of London to a series of conferences, and followed these with letters, which will be found under the title of *Episcopalia*, printed in 1686. The first letter was dated April 25, 1679, urging the administration of baptism in public and the partaking of the Lord's Supper, also urging catechising, and suggesting that the persons catechised should be made to give at the next meeting the meaning of what had been expounded to them. In other letters, he urged confirmation, the visitation of the sick, and the observance of holy days, while, in a letter of July 6, 1680, he argues against the Roman Catholics for withholding the cup from the laity, and, in a letter of April 6, 1683, he argues against the non-conformists. Meanwhile, in 1680, by writing to certain Protestant divines on the Continent, he obtained answers to the effect that all Protstants in England should join the National Church.

Scarcely any attention has been paid to Compton's connection with the policy towards the uncivilized denizens of Pennsylvania which has reflected so much glory upon William Penn. It is possible that the great Quaker himself in early

days believed in Indian rights, and was familiar with the recognition of them by the Swedes and Dutch and succeeding English on the Hudson and the Delaware; but before any expression on the subject by Penn known to me, Compton, who was a member of the Committee of the Privy Council for Trade and Plantations, recommended, if he did not urge with heat, that Penn should purchase, instead of seizing, the land which the Indians were roaming over. This advice seems to have been given at a meeting of the Committee on June 14, 1680, the first time that Penn's application for a grant of land was considered, Penn being called in, and Compton being present then, but at no later consideration of the grant. Penn doubtless gave assurance that he would be extremely careful in this respect. In a letter dated Philadelphia, August 14, 1683, to the Committee, Penn says: "I have exactly followed the Bishop of London's counsel [spelt 'council'] by buying and not taking away the Natives' land, with whom I have settled a very kind correspondence."

The Quakers could not be embraced in any plan for the reconciliation or comprehension of Protestant Dissenters with the Church of England. Most sectarians who disliked episcopal authority, or objected to particular parts of the Prayer Book, or to other than extemporaneous prayers, had really little after all to separate them from Churchmen of the Compton school: but the Quakers had rejected the sacraments, were setting up a brand new ministry without ordination by human hands, and even were not expressing assent to a creed. There was the fear that they would lapse into Deism, if not Libertinism. As far back as 1677, according to one of Penn's letters, Penn, apparently in connection with a preliminary sounding of the King as to a grant of land, had an "encounter" with Compton before the King, Lord Danby being present. I am ignorant of what actually took place. When Penn's final application was made, it was really important that the usual institutions and practices of religion should have a foothold in the extensive region to be granted. The applicant, to be sure, had announced freedom of worship as a principle of his projected government, but the time might come when Quaker radicals would exterminate what they deemed objectionable. Bishop Compton, being absent from the meeting of the Committee for Trade and Plantations on January 15, 1680-1681, sent a letter, then read, asking that Penn be obliged by the charter to admit a chaplain of the Bishop of London's appointment when requested by a number of the

planters. This matter was committed to Lord Chief Justice North, and a clause was inserted in the charter requiring and charging as follows: "That if any of the inhabitants of the said province to the number of twenty shall at any time hereafter be desirous, and shall by writing or by any person deputed for them signify such desire to the Bishop of London that any preacher or preachers to be approved of by the said Bishop may be sent unto them for their instruction, that then such preacher or preachers shall and may be and reside within the said province without any denial or molestation whatsoever." Notwithstanding King Charles I's supposed order, before spoken of, devolving ecclesiastical jurisdiction, this clause in the charter may be taken as the origin and measure of the power of the Bishop of London over Pennsylvania until the American Revolution, except when Bishop Gibson possessed the additional power of visitation and punishment as to the Anglican churches and ministers in all the colonies.

At some stage in the proceedings for Penn's grant, Penn says "at the passing of my patent," Compton, in the words of Penn, "did what he could to get savings for the church, but was opposed by the Earl of Radnor, the President," i. e., President of the Council. We must suppose that Compton tried for ecclesiastical jurisdiction over decedents' estates as in England, that being at one time thought of as a source of revenue from America, with which to endow missions there. After the adoption of the charter, Compton was intrusted by his fellows of the Committee with the drafting of a bill for establishing the Protestant Church in Pennsylvania. Penn naturally was opposed to any money of an inhabitant being paid for a form of worship other than that of his choice, and the project, whatever it included, came to naught, perhaps from knowledge of the King's wishes.

The Duke of York, having ascended the throne as King James II of England, and having suppressed Monmouth's rebellion, started friction with the freemen of the realm in November, 1685, by urging upon Parliament the maintenance of a standing army, and expressing intention to retain in it the Roman Catholic officers who had served in the emergency, which retention indeed involved violation of the law imposing a Protestant test. Burnett, describing the debates which ensued, and which prevented James from obtaining the necessary appropriation, tells us that Compton, addressing the House of Lords, and announcing that he expressed the sense

of all the bishops, said that the test was the best fence they had for their religion; if they gave up so great a point, all the rest would soon follow; if the King could by his authority supersede such a law, fortified with so many clauses, and, above all, with that of an incapacity, it was in vain to think of law any more; the government would become arbitrary and absolute. Macaulay summarizes this speech in words which Burnett does not actually put in Compton's mouth, viz., that in the opinion of his brethren and himself the whole civil and ecclesiastical constitution of the realm was in danger. Parliament was prorogued by the disappointed King on November 20. On December 16, 1685, the Bishop was dismissed as Dean of the Royal Chapel, and about the same time his name was stricken from the list of Privy Councillors.

The King having sent orders on March 15, 1685-1686, to the two Archbishops forbidding the inferior clergy from preaching controversial sermons of a certain kind, the talented Dr. Sharp preached a sermon which was represented as making unbecoming reflections, and uttering expressions endeavoring to stir up the people, and lead them into disobedience and rebellion. An order was sent in the King's name to the Bishop of London, who was Sharp's diocesan, requiring Sharp's suspension from further preaching in any parish church or chapel in the diocese "until he had given the King satisfaction," and the King's pleasure were known. Sharp denying his guilt, and being ready to vindicate himself by oath and the notes of his sermon, the Bishop, with the approbation of men learned in ecclesiastical law, declared that he had no power to proceed in such a summary way, that he must act as a judge, and could not condemn without knowledge of the cause, after citing and hearing the accused. In hopes, however, of accommodating the matter, he persuaded Sharp to abstain for the time being from officiating. Sharp took the Bishop's answer to the Secretary of State. Sharp presented his own petition to the King, who declined to receive it, resolving to punish the man "higher up," in the parlance of to-day. By royal commission, Archbishop Sancroft (who, however, never acted under it), Bishop Crewe, Bishop Sprat, of Rochester, the Earl of Rochester, who was then Lord Treasurer, the Earl of Sunderland, then Secretary of State, Sir Edward Herbert, then Chief Justice of King's Bench, and Lord Jeffereys, then Lord Chancellor, or any three of them, Jeffereys being one, were authorized to exercise jurisdiction over ecclesiastical affairs, to visit and correct abuses, etc., correctable by ecclesiastical law, with power to suspend and deprive all offending ecclesiastical

persons, and to inflict other punishment. The Bishop of London was summoned and appeared, and was peremptorily asked why he had not suspended Dr. Sharp, and was at once given to understand that he would not be allowed to question the legality of the commission, which, indeed, could be attacked as issued in contravention of the prohibition in the Act abolishing the old Court of High Commission. Compton claimed that the proceedings against him were contrary to the statute law, and that, by the law of the Christian Church in all ages, he was to be tried by his Metropolitan and the Suffragans, and that moreover the fault alleged was prior to the date of the commission. He and his counsel raised the dilemma that if the King's command was to suspend, that was a judicial act, to be performed in a judicial way; whereas, if the King meant a silencing, he had been obeyed, in that the advice to Sharp not to preach until the King's pleasure were known, was equivalent to an admonition, and Sharp could have been censured if he had not complied therewith. To secure a majority to suspend the Bishop from office, King James is said to have spoken "roundly" to the Earl of Rochester, who saw that he must vote to suspend, if he wished to retain the Treasurership. So he yielded, and, on September 6, 1686, Bishop Compton was suspended from office. The care of the diocese was given to others. His revenues were not interfered with; for, benefices being a freehold, he would have had the matter tried over again in the regular courts of law, where he was very likely to win. So he continued to reside in Fulham Palace, taking delight in a botanical garden, for, the article in the *Dictionary* shows, Compton was a great collector of botanical specimens. Six months after the sentence of suspension, Compton, to avoid being proceeded against as obstinate, petitioned the King to be restored to the exercise of the episcopal powers; but the petition made no acknowledgment of any fault: so this had no other effect than to stop all further proceedings, leaving the sentence of suspension still in force. So it continued until after the trial of the seven bishops, thus saving Compton from facing the perilous question of reading in the churches the royal declaration suspending the tests. Meanwhile, Dr. Sharp, who was also suspended by Jeffereys and his colleagues, was restored to the exercise of his functions.

Burnett supposes that it was by Compton's arrangement that clergymen of the Church of England entered into correspondence with the Prince of Orange, and induced him to use his influence with the Dissenters to make common cause with them, he even sending to England to counteract those friendly to the King some of the Dissenters fugitive in Holland. Offers were made that in a better time there would be a com-

prehension, or inclusion, of such as could be brought into conjunction with the Church, and a toleration of the others.

Compton, instigated, Burnett says, by Lord Danby, joined in the project of having the Prince of Orange come over to England as a deliverer: and, the Prince having said that he would do so only upon the invitation of a considerable number of men supposed to understand the sense of the nation, a request under date of June 30, 1688, the day that the seven prelates were acquitted, was signed by six temporal peers and the suspended Bishop of London. Not aware of this, but hearing that the Prince might invade England, the King sent for the Anglican Bishops, and, in the course of the first interview with them, declared his intention to take off the suspension of their brother of London, which was accordingly done on October 1, 1688. Compton was in decided jeopardy when William was about to land, for William had issued a declaration announcing that he had been invited by persons of all ranks, and in particular by many of the peers both spiritual and temporal. The King sent for Compton, and asked him if there was the slightest ground for the assertion as to the spiritual peers. Compton, practically with a halter around his neck, not wishing to utter a direct falsehood, saved himself by an answer which Macaulay recognizes as ingenious, but thinks little different from a lie. "Sir," Compton said, "I am quite confident that there is not one of my brethren who is not as guiltless as myself in this matter." The King said: "I fully acquit you all, but I think it necessary that you should publicly contradict the slanderous charge brought against you in the Prince's Declaration." The next day, the spiritual peers who happened to be in London were called in, Compton coming a second time. When each of the others very truthfully denied having invited the Prince, Compton remarked: "I gave Your Majesty my answer yesterday." The King allowed all to go in peace, asking them to draw up a paper expressing abhorrence of the Prince's design. The Tanner MSS. are quoted as Macaulay's authority. A few days later, on being summoned, several of the prelates, including Compton, declined to sign any such paper as the King had asked for.

Compton, if he did not instigate, at least enabled the Princess Anne to flee from London during the absence of the King. The Bishop with a hackney coach awaited her in the park, at one o'clock at night, and took her and three women attendants, accompanied by the Earl of Dorset, to the house which the Bishop was temporarily occupying. From thence, the Princess, the Bishop, the Earl, and Lady Fitzharding and Lady Churchill set out before daybreak, and, stopping a few

hours at the seat of the Earl, made their way to Nottingham. The Bishop rode before the Princess's carriage, and on this preliminary part of the journeying or later he is described as wearing a blue or purple cloak, buff coat, and jack-boots, and girt with a sword, and having pistols in his holsters. A guard of several hundred, ultimately quite a little army, was formed, under which she proceeded to other towns, and the Bishop accepted the colonelcy of it. Entering Oxford, he appeared at the head with drawn sword, and had his color-bearer carry the motto, "*Nolumus leges Angliae mutare.*" Fortunately no casualties occurred, the manœuvres ending in a few days.

The willingness of this shepherd of the Prince of Peace's flock to take part in shedding blood did not stop with defending a fugitive princess. It would extend to measures of retaliation, and against innocent persons. Lord Chesterfield's *Memoirs*, quoted by Miss Strickland, says, that, after the Princess had been brought to Leicester, Chesterfield was asked by the Bishop of London, in the Princess's name, to attend a meeting, which Lord Devonshire explained was to form an association to destroy all the Papists in England in case the Prince of Orange were murdered by any of them. Lord Chesterfield mentions his own refusal to join, or to sign a certain paper drawn up by the Bishop, the exact terms of which we do not know.

With some of his clergy and some dissenting ministers, the Bishop joined in the welcome of the Prince of Orange to London. The Bishop of London and the Bishop of Bristol, Sir Jonathan Trelawny, were the only bishops who voted in convention after James II's flight in favor of filling the throne as vacant. Compton joined, as appears in S. L. Lee's sketch, in all the measures to transfer the sovereignty to William and Mary, and the power to William. Compton was made a Privy Councillor on the day after William and Mary were proclaimed. Archbishop Sancroft on March 15, 1688-1689, empowered the Bishop of London with any three bishops of the province of Canterbury to exercise the archiepiscopal authority, and, under this, Compton was the principal consecrator of Burnett. Compton, in the absence of Archbishop Sancroft, crowned William and Mary.

Compton earnestly supported not only the Toleration Act, which was passed, but also the Comprehension Bill, which was sidetracked to await a Convocation of the Clergy, as it yielded so much to the Presbyterians.

When Sancroft was incurring, under an Act of Parliament, deprivation for not taking the oaths to the new sovereigns, Compton was the logical choice for the succession to Sancroft's place, politically as the one ecclesiastic who could

be called a leader of the party which had triumphed. Compton's fitness from so many years' experience in a great see and his devotion to the Church's work apart from politics, would have mitigated the handing over of such an office as a reward for party services. Promotion from the bishopric of London to the headship of the province was natural, and, with the non-jurors excluded, there was no one left upon the episcopal bench who had a claim by reason of any great scholarly attainments. Yet at the inauguration of an era of supposed liberty and constitutional government, the appointment called for by party and perhaps people, by routine and perhaps the suffragans, was not made. William, like many a politician, may have thought the man in question too big for him. Compton, as primate of all England, might be an à Becket. Far more reliance could there be upon one who would see in his promotion his sovereign's pure grace and favor, instead of a matter of course. Tillotson, a Dean, who had been of service to William or his friends, was a great preacher: so William early determined to appoint him. That he was a latitudinarian is supposed rather to have appealed to William, and Tillotson's views as to eternal torment are said to have comforted Mary, whose influence, however, may have been *nil*, like her power. Before Tillotson's appointment could be accomplished, Sancroft being still only suspended, Compton was one of the Commissioners to propose work for the Convocation, and certified the suggestions of the Commissioners, which went very far, but perhaps not as far as the Comprehension Bill. There was a strong party among the lower clergy against deviations from the usages, and against the prime mover, Tillotson. Compton is said to have aided this party by his influence to defeat Tillotson for Prolocutor of the Lower House of the Convocation, while he himself became Prolocutor of the Upper House. Tillotson subsequently wrote to the King that the Bishop of London was at the bottom of the storm raised in the Convocation, being jealous lest he (Tillotson) would be a hindrance to his (Compton's) attaining what he wanted. Yet Compton, in replying to the speech of the Prolocutor of the Lower House on presentation, urged indulgence and charity to the Dissenters. The Lower House raised dilatory questions, and nothing was accomplished. Tillotson accepted the Archbishopric of Canterbury with reluctance, and after a while there was a renewal of pleasant relations with Compton. In the next century, John Wesley privately made the remark: "Archbishop Tillotson knew no more about true Christianity than Mahomet." This, the more violent Whitefield adopted, reiterated, and vindicated in print, and so scandalized the Churchmen who looked back

to great names that the Rector of Christ Church, Philadelphia, refused in 1740 to let Whitefield preach again in that edifice.

William III might have recognized Compton's claim or merit by giving him the Archbishopric of York, but did not do so, nor did he let him succeed Tillotson, who did not live more than three years and a half after consecration. The treatment which Compton had received would naturally have made a man bitter. It apparently made him more and more independent, less enthusiastic for William of Orange and those surrounding the latter. In 1691, Compton told Rev. James Blair that the Church of England party was the weakest in the Council (Perry's *Collections—Virginia*). Yet Compton was in no position to quarrel, if he wished to attend to business. It is claimed that he had a forgiving disposition, and it is told of him, that, once having to arbitrate between a London minister and his parishioners, he heard some of the latter testify that he had been spoken of contemptuously by the minister; when, far from letting this affect the decision, the Bishop said: "I am glad of it, for he has given me an opportunity of setting you a good example in forgiving him."

[The Rev. Professor L. M. Robinson having, after the reading of this paper, called the attention of those present to the importance in the history of church government of Bishop Compton's designation of two clergymen as his Commissaries for certain districts, Dr. James Blair for Virginia, and Dr. Thomas Bray for Maryland, which practice the later Bishops of London followed, I here mention some other facts which were omitted by me for lack of time. After the English Revolution, there was a springing up of the Anglican Church in the American colonies. King James's neutral governors were supplanted; in Maryland there was violence, overthrowing Roman Catholic prestige; the development of Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, and New England took thither settlers who had always obeyed the English laws as to religion, and were ready to attend conforming chapels, if such were at hand. The garrison at Manhattan Island introduced Anglican worship there: the officials of Maryland appear to have brought about the foundation of Christ Church, Philadelphia. In time even non-juring ministers wandered through the possessions to supply any demand which could not wait for acceptable priests. The disestablishment of the Episcopal Church of Scotland strengthened the force of missionaries in America, Compton sending over some of those who had lost their livings. In providing clergymen for America, he even gave a chance to some men who had not shown themselves very desirable, but, as to all sent to Virginia in Governor Andros's time at least, Compton had told all that he knew about them

to Andros, and had promised to turn out any who did not behave well. From other religious denominations came men to take holy orders, one at least for the very purpose of work in America, and one at least who did a great work there. William Vesey, of New York, said to have been brought up as a Dissenter, crossed over to England, was ordained, and returned as the earliest minister of Trinity Church. George Keith, the leader of the party striving to commit the Quakers of Pennsylvania to an Orthodox creed, was disowned by the Yearly Meeting in London, and afterwards held independent worship in a hall in that city, wearing the Quaker garb, and administering baptism and communion. Retiring from this, he was, on May 12, 1700, admitted to the diaconate by Bishop Compton, and, at some date not known, was ordained to the priesthood. As the earliest missionary of the Propagation Society, he made a tour of the colonies from New Hampshire to North Carolina, accompanied by Rev. John Talbot. This resulted in the establishing of several churches.]

Among Compton's kindly acts were those in relief of the necessities of various foreign Protestants seeking refuge or help in England. With the trouble, after all, to get sufficient men to preach in the American wilderness what was generally agreed upon among Orthodox Protestants, both Compton and those under him and the Propagation Society accepted the services of Lutherans and others, whether ordained by bishops, like the Swedes, or by those rejecting an episcopate: and particularly did he do so to spread Christianity among the Indians. The supplying of parish churches in Virginia and Maryland and of Christ Church, Philadelphia, remained the concern of the Bishop of London, and Compton also was by the charter of the college of William and Mary in Virginia made its first Chancellor. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, incorporated in 1701, took some of the missionary business off the hands of the Bishop of London. The Society sometimes assisted men sent to America by him.

At the accession of Queen Anne, Bishop Compton was again made a Privy Councillor, and, in January, 1704-1705, was appointed a permanent Commissioner for Trade and Plantations at a salary of £1000. He was a promoter, we are told, of Queen Anne's Bounty, but he was not the prime mover in the establishment of it. He became quite a reactionary for buttressing the Church. He probably voted for each bill against occasional conformity, certainly for the bill which failed in 1705. Perhaps with the design of limiting the offices, not merely to Protestants, but to men of the National Church, one of the test laws of Charles II had re-

quired the reception of the sacrament by Anglican rite as a necessary qualification. The design had been frustrated by Dissenters receiving the sacrament in that way at the time prescribed, and attending the non-conformist meetings ever after. At last, in 10th Anne, under the title of an Act for Preserving the Protestant religion by better Securing the Church of England as by Law Established, etc., there was placed upon the statute books the rigorous provision, substantially as proposed in 1704, that after March 25, 1712, any officeholder required to qualify by so taking the sacrament, who should during continuance in office attend a non-conforming religious meeting, should be fined and be incapable of any public employment, but could, after conviction, recover his capacity for the grant of an office by conforming for a year. This remained the law for about six years. In 1705, when the House of Lords went into committee to settle the question whether, as cried in certain quarters, the Church was in danger, Compton declared that it was. He referred to the danger, not only in the profaneness and irreligion then rife, but in the licentiousness, as he called it, of the press, issuing books not fit to be read, among them a vile one by a clergyman of his diocese whom he had endeavored to punish, but under the laws could not reach; and this Bishop, who may be deemed an armed rebel in James II's time, now saw a danger in sermons being preached justifying rebellion. The House voting that the Church was not in danger, Bishop Compton joined in a protest. Dr. Sacheverell, with many animadversions upon "false brethren," preached in 1709 the unlawfulness of resisting the supreme power and the error of religious toleration and the danger from corruption in manners and licentiousness in opinion and practice. When he was impeached, as reflecting upon the Revolution, the Toleration Act, and Queen Anne's government, Compton voted "Not guilty." Compton rejoiced in the change of Cabinet effected in August, 1710, whereby the Tories returned to power.

In the words of Collins's *Peerage*, Compton was "exceedingly hospitable to friends and neighbours, besides which he constantly provided for twelve poor people, and for many years accidentally every day at his gate. He disposed money to every one who could make out he was a proper object of charity. Several ancient people, he supported by constant yearly pensions, several children he maintained at school at his own charge, and several of them he brought up to the university, and others he put out to sea and to trades, for he never left what he undertook imperfect or unfinished. He was so indulgent to the Church and clergy that he spared no costs or pains to serve them, buying in several advowsons, and

purchasing small impropriations, settling them on poor vicars, also giving large sums for rebuilding of churches." He died poor.

There is an account in Collins's *Peerage* of Bishop Compton's last illness, in which, after his confinement to his bed, he received the sacrament, rising upon his knees unassisted to take it, spending the time he lived after this, how long we know not, in meditation and prayer. He died on July 7, 1713, in the eighty-first year of his age.

Compton was buried outside of the church at Fulham, he having disliked interments within a sacred edifice. He used to say, "The churchyard for the dead, the church for the living."—Note to Evelyn's *Diary*, edited by Bray.

It is from Compton that the American Church traces by the line of principal consecrators its claim to apostolic ordination. Compton consecrated Sancroft on January 27, 1677-1678. Sancroft naturally, as Archbishop, was principal consecrator of Trelawny, November 8, 1685; Trelawny—why we know not—was principal consecrator of Potter, May 15, 1715; Potter, becoming Archbishop in 1737, consecrated Herring on January 15, 1737-1738; Herring, becoming Archbishop in 1747, consecrated Cornwallis on February 19, 1749-1750; Cornwallis consecrated Moore on February 12, 1755; and Moore, as Archbishop of Canterbury, was the chief consecrator of William White on February 4, 1787.

